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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/804,761

03/19/2004

Stephen Hochschuler

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7691

24113 7590 03/21/2008
PATTERSON, THUENTE, SKAAR & CHRISTENSEN, P.A.
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EXAMINER

ARAJ, MICHAEL J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3733

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

03/21/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 22, 28-34 and 79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,549,679 to Kuslich in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,413,536 to Gibson et al.

Kuslich discloses in figure 6 the creation of a cavity in the vertebral bone through an access aperture, and the insertion of a container, which container is described in detail in column 7, lines 1-62. Column 9, lines 55-60 describe the use of bone chips implanted within the bag. Column 7, lines 15-17 disclose additional different implantation materials, e.g. hydroxyapatite. Also described with the filler material are fluids, which are considered to be the second bone filler. Inherently, the bone chips have a different viscosity and chemical makeup than the hydroxyapatite. The filler is introduced to the cancellous bone as in-growth of bone Occurs.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed December 13, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. With reference to the interference number 105,252 (BPAI 2005) there appears to be no page 13 of the order in the file for the present application.

The examiner cannot verify wherein the Board stated that claims at issue in the interference are embodied in U.S. Patent No. 7,226,481. Even so, the decision of the Board is only an opinion and being considered differently in this case but is taken into consideration.

Applicant maintains the argument that the '679 Patent is directed towards spinal fusion to treat the disc space and not to treating the vertebral bone itself. Again, the Examiner agrees with this statement, however it does not distinctly overcome this art rejection. This patent not only treats the vertebral disc space but also the vertebral bone. Because this treats the vertebral bone in addition to the vertebral disc space the '679 Patent clearly reads on the claim limitations. The claim limitation does not state anything about treating "only" a vertebral bone. A cavity is made into the vertebral bone and the container is inserted into the vertebral bone as well as the vertebral space.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

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the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHAEL J. ARAJ whose telephone number is (571)272-5963. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael J Araj/
Examiner, Art Unit 3733

/Eduardo C. Robert/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733

<div><i>Application Number</i></div> <div></div>	Application/Control No.	Applicant(s)/Patent under Reexamination	
	10/804,761	HOCHSCHULER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	MICHAEL J. ARAJ	3733	